

of subjects, and pass the money through so many hands? Taxes should be proportioned to what may be annually spared by the individual. * * * The simplest system of taxation yet adopted is that of levying on the land and the laborer. But it would be better to levy the same sums on the produce of that labor when collected in the barn of the fanner; because then if through the badness of the year he made little, he would pay little. It would be better yet to levy it not in his hands, but in those of the merchant purchaser; because though the farmer would in fact pay it, as the merchant purchaser would deduct it from the original price of his produce, yet the fanner would not be sensible that he paid it. (Written from Paris k: James Madison, 1784. F. IV., 10.)

TAXATION.—A proposition has been made to Congress to begin sinking the public debt by a tax on pleasure horses; that is to say, on all horses not employed for the dray, draught or farm. It is said there is not a horse of that description eastward of New York. And as to call this a direct tax would oblige, them to proportion it among the States according to the census, they choose to class it among the indirect taxes. (To George Gilmer, 1792. V. VI., 140.) * * * It is uncertain what will be its fate. Besides its partiality, it is infinitely objectionable as foisting in a direct tax under the name of an indirect one. (To T. M. Randolph, 1790. F. VI., 14*.)

TAXATION.—I am conscious that an equal division of property is impracticable. But the consequences of enormous inequality producing so much misery to the bulk of mankind, legislator cannot invent

too many devices for subdividing property, only taking care to let their subdivisions go hand in hand with the natural affections of the human mind. The descent of property of every kind therefore to all the children, or to all the brother; and sisters, or other relations in equal degree is a politic measure, and a practicable one. Another means of silently lessening the inequality of property is to exempt all from taxation below a certain point and to tax the higher portions of property in geometrical progression as they rise. (To Rev, James Madison, 1795. F. VII., 35.)